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GREENVILLE RECEIVES GREAT AMERICAN MAIN STREET AWARD FOR ITS REVITALIZED DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

CINCINNATI, OH (MAY 19, 2003) – Kennedy Smith, Director of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Main Street Center, announced today that Greenville, South Carolina has earned a 2003 Great American Main Street Award for its successful efforts in revitalizing its downtown area through historic preservation. The award was presented by Ms. Smith at the National Trust's 2003 National Town Meeting on Main Street in Cincinnati, which runs through May 21, 2003.

Once serving as the retail center of the region, Greenville's downtown area began to languish in the 1960's as it was confronted by suburban development and sprawl. Facing a dying commercial district by the mid-1980's, community officials recognized the need for an organized effort to revitalize the downtown area and created a master plan with a vision to create a state-of-the-art community in which the residents would be proud to live, work, and play. After years of hard work and dedication to the master plan, Greenville's downtown area experienced a renaissance that with the help of a successful public/private partnership has resulted in the creation of an established residential community that boasts a solid commercial market and popular attractions for all ages and interests.

"The revival of Greenville illustrates what vision and determination in a community can accomplish," said Richard Moe, president of the National Trust which works to save diverse historic places and revitalize communities. "Faced with a dying commercial district, the people of Greenville came together to form a successful partnership to revitalize their community and renovate their historic buildings rather than tearing down the structures that give downtown Greenville its unique character. New construction is sensitive to this character and sets a framework for future community revitalization around the country."

Today's downtown is rich with beautiful sidewalks, distinctive architecture, historic treasures and tremendous natural resources. Commercial and residential construction is at an all-time high. In the last three years, several new office buildings have been constructed or renovated adding more than 350,000 sq. ft. of office space. Over 100 units of residential are under construction with an additional 275 units planned. Boasting 70 restaurants, downtown food sales have increased 127% in the past five years and 15% in the past year alone. Business receipts have increased more than \$200 million (or 40%) since 1997. Adding to the vitality and economic growth to downtown Greenville, the City is now constructing a \$12 million world-class public garden with a one-of-a-kind pedestrian bridge over a waterfall.

Other 2003 Great American Main Street Award winners are Littleton, New Hampshire; Manassas, Virginia; Rome, Georgia; Wenatchee, Washington. Each winning community will receive a \$2,500 cash prize to further its revitalization efforts, a bronze plaque commemorating its award, road signs, and a certificate.

Established in 1980, the National Trust's National Main Street Center helps communities of all sizes revitalize their older and historic commercial districts. Active in over 1,700 downtowns and urban neighborhoods, the Main Street program has generated more than \$16.1 billion in new investment. Participating communities have created 226,000 net new jobs, 56,300 net new businesses, and

rehabilitated more than 88,700 buildings, leveraging an average of \$ 39.93 in new investment for every dollar spent on main street district revitalization effort.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is a private, nonprofit membership organization dedicated to protecting the irreplaceable. Recipient of the National Humanities Medal, the Trust provides leadership, education and advocacy to save America's diverse historic places and revitalize communities. Its Washington, DC headquarters staff, six regional offices and 23 historic sites work with the Trust's quarter-million members and thousands of local community groups in all 50 states. For more information, visit the National Trust's web site at www.nationaltrust.org.

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